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"Trains represent the future and not the past in transportation in America"--President Carter, 1979.

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LETTERS

I enjoyed Ken Maylath's article on British trains (RTN #208) and I would like to add a few comments. My wife and I visit Great Britain frequently and most of our travel is by train.

It is extremely important to be sure that you are on the right train and on the right part of it. It is the exception rather than the rule on British trains for a trainman to go thru a car checking tickets, and thus there is no reliable source of information. A number of trains divide. On a train I have taken from London to Canterbury, the four cars nearest the barrier go to Canterbury and on to Dover, but the first four cars are switched en route and go to Ramsgate.

A year ago my wife and I took a local train from Cambridge to Peterborough where we were to change to the high speed train for York. The train from Cambridge was late, and I was worried about the connection. We saw a high speed train pull into the station just as we did. Fortunately it was across the same platform and we were able to make it. It was not until we had been riding for some time and I saw from the railroad map I always carry that we were going thru the wrong places that I realized we had boarded the train for Leeds rather than the one for York that we wanted.

I am more enthusiastic than Mr. Maylath about the food served by British Rail. There is one thing about the regular dining cars that will confuse Americans. You cannot wander in whenever you feel like it during the hours the dining cars are operated and be served. When all those who are coming to the dining car have come for a particular sitting, they beging serving that meal, course by course, to everyone who is there, and no one else is admitted until the next sitting. The one marvelous thing about the buffet cars on the British trains is that they are exempt from the licensing laws that put such weird restraints on the hours pubs are allowed to remain open. The buffet cars sell beer and liquor at any time.

Finally, I think the difference between first and second class is greater than Mr. Maylath indicates. I quote what I said on the subject in a book I wrote last year:

"To a train lover like me Britain is a joy. Trains run frequently, and punctually enough that it is usually safe to plan tight connections. The passenger cars on the usual intercity trains are at best adequate--and those that operate from London to Canterbury are downright shabby--but the new 125 trains put to shame any railroad equipment in the United States. They are clean, attractive, and comfortable, and the 125mph speed from which they take their name makes travel very quick. What I have said here applies to the first-class portions of the trains only. Even on the 125 trains, the second-class cars are crowded and less attractive, and on the London-Canterbury trains the second-class cars often resemble the New York subway at rush hour."

Charles Alan Wright
Austin, Texas

RTN no. 206 contained a table of Amtrak's locomotive fleet on page 21 and some remarks concerning various horsepower ratings on page 16. Your readers may not be aware of some changes which occurred in the way locomotive horsepower ratings are computed.

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Published twice monthly by Message Media, P. O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription $15.00 per year; single copy 65¢. Overseas and institutional rates on request. STAFF: James Russell, Editor. Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large. Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Southern California; James Feeney, New York; Jack Ferry, Illinois; Adron Hall, Mississippi; Kenneth Maylath, Maryland; Peter Roehm, Massachusetts.

The diesel locomotive is rated by the horsepower going into the main generator for tractive purposes. In the case of the F40PH, any head end power being drawn by the train must be subtracted from the locomotive rating at about 35hp per car. Losses in the generator, rectifiers, wiring, motors and gears amount to about 15%. An SDP40F thus puts out about 2550hp at the rail.

Electric locomotives, such as the GG-1, were rated in horsepower at the rail until the introduction of the E-60 for the Black Mesa & Lake Powell in 1972. At that time the General Electric Company introduced the term "Diesel Equivalent Horsepower" in order to permit a direct comparison between electric and diesel locomotives. All electric locomotives are now rated in Diesel Equivalent Horsepower. The GG-1 would now be rated at about 5435hp.

Electric locomotives, since they are not limited by an onboard power plant, are also given a short time overload rating. The overload horsepower rating is about 9000 for the AEM-7, 11,000 for the E-60, and 8500 for the GG-1. Due to rail adhesion limits and electrical connections of the traction motors the overload ratings can be utilized only after the locomotive has reached about 30% of its top speed limit; about 40mph for the E-60 and AEM-7.

It is interesting to note that one AEM-7 will outperform five F40PH's when coupled to an 8-car Amfleet train due to the higher horsepower and much lower total train weight.

Richard U. Cogswell
Alexandria, Virginia

ON THE COVER

The Rio Grande's "other" passenger train, the Silverton-Durango narrow gauge steam tourist run, pauses at 9300-foot elevation Silverton, Colorado on July 21. In this issue, Sylvia and Ted Blishak take us for a ride on this line as well as on the Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railway. Photo by Sylvia Blishak.

Reader Michael Jarel of Los Angeles expresses his apologies for an inaccuracy in his letter (RTN 207). He stated that no ATS system is used by an railroad in California, when Santa Fe has many stretches of ATS track there. Mr. Jarel says he hopes that the impact of his message is not lost because of this inaccuracy.

AUTO-TRAIN FILES IN BANKRUPTCY

Auto-Train Corporation on Sep 8 filed for protection under U.S. bankruptcy laws after it had learned that a large Swiss bank loan it was to receive was on shaky ground. Federal officials informed Auto-Train on Sep 5 that third parties that were arranging the loan for Auto-Train had records of questionable business practices in the past, according to reports. Auto-Train then wired the Swiss bank to cancel the loan. On the same day, the corporation filed for bankruptcy in order to allow it to continue doing business while it works out a plan to repay its debts.

On Sep 4, Seaboard Coast Line threatened to cancel its contract with Auto-Train, and insisted on prepayment for use of its tracks. Auto-Train reportedly owes SCL $4.5 million in back payments for use of its facilities. Auto-Train came up with $19,500 in cash late on the 4th to cover its run from Sanford, Florida on Sep 5. The corporation also paid about $35,000 in court judgments after the county sheriff padlocked its Sanford station and seized properties of the rail carrier. The court judgments were for bills to various creditors owed by Auto-Train. Trading in Auto-Train stock was halted by the American Stock Exchange on Sep 5. The company began cashing employee checks at its offices after they began bouncing. A-T's subsidiary, Railway Services, has laid off 40 workers.

LATEST AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

	JUN 1980		JUL 1980	
Metroliners	135,498	-13.7	126,930	-12.6
NE Corr Conventional	444,497	-9.0	458,856	-8.7
New Haven Springfld	21,848	-29.5	22,225	-31.4
NY-Philadelphia	199,564	-4.0	202,001	.6
Phila-Harrisburg	81,179	-10.4	79,184	-17.4
NY-Harrisburg	29,906	67.5	29,762	77.7
TOTAL NE CORRIDOR:	912,492	-8.1	918,958	-7.5
NY-Niagara Falls	60,475	-10.1	62,835	-11.4
Chicago-St. Louis	9,884	-5.4	10,920	-4.5
Chicago-Milwaukee	26,475	-14.3	27,485	-10.4
Chicago-Detroit	42,979	-13.7	44,418	-10.4
Chicago-Carbondale	13,782	-5.5	14,502	-4.1
Chicago-Quincy	6,990	-6.0	8,658	-4.4
L.A.-San Diego	122,853	-1.4	127,036	2.5
Portland-Vancouver	15,879	-3.9	15,195	-13.3
Washington-Cincinnati	11,669	74.4	12,311	63.7
Wash.-Martinsburg	23,860	2.2	20,910	-6.8
Oakland-Bakersfield	14,966	39.0	16,097	57.7
New York-Montreal	13,676	6.8	16,188	9.9
Chicago-Port Huron	9,683	-14.1	10,773	-10.2
Chicago-Dubuque	3,856	-38.2	4,202	-33.5
Chicago-Duluth	13,644	-11.2	13,677	-10.5
Chicago-Valparaiso	18,827	--	18,520	--
Chicago-Kansas City	13,540	53.4	15,681	61.6
Phila.-Pittsburgh	7,699	--	8,241	--
TOTAL SHORT DIST.:	430,737	3.3	447,649	5.0
Washington-Montreal	37,441	-5.3	41,170	-10.4
New York-Florida	66,067	-18.0	77,175	-15.7
Chicago-NY/Washington	29,986	9.4	36,170	16.5
Chicago-Cincinnati/DC	15,228	-15.9	18.081	-8.7
Chicago-Seattle	29,238	46.7	42,260	81.1
Chicago-S.F./L.A.*	51,348	57.6	59,903	80.2
Chicago-Los Angeles	35,446	5.9	39,564	6.1
Chicago-New Orleans	21,108	-7.6	27,488	-9.3
Chicago-Texas	26,239	32.4	31,064	21.7
L.A.-New Orleans	10,678	-14.7	10,335	-19.4
L.A.-Seattle	54,894	-2.2	54,808	-9.4
Chicago-NY/Boston	33,394	11.5	41,514	15.6
Boston-Newport News	56,597	-13.8	61,729	-17.1
New York-Savannah	40,355	-12.4	49,288	-13.1
Seattle-Salt Lake	16,645	-2.5	15,973	-3.9
New York-New Orleans	47,898	74.6	51,685	70.3
TOTAL LONG DIST.:	572,562	4.3	658,207	5.3
Special trains	--		800	-74.5
SYSTEM TOTAL:	1,915,791	-6.9	2,025,614	-6.0

*SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR plus DESERT WIND

The adjoining figures are numbers of Amtrak riders for June and July. The second and fourth columns are percentage of change over the corresponding months of 1979.

Ridership in these two summer months was very good, almost equaling that of the 1979 summer with its gasoline shortage, and high in spite of recession conditions. Amtrak made special note of the over-2 million total ridership in July. In both months, short and long distance total ridership was up, with Northeast Corridor ridership continuing to run below previous year levels, partly because track work there causes delays, and partly because some Corridor riders are now counted on long distance trains such as the CRESCENT.

If allowances are made for the routes discontinued in the fall of 1979, June ridership was off only 2.3% rather than 6.9%--in Jun 1979 96,306 riders used the routes now discontinued. Similarly in Jul 1979 106,049 people rode the now-discontinued routes, so July ridership is actually only 1.1% less than the record ridership of Jul 1979.

Amtrak still includes the SF ZEPHYR and DESERT WIND riders in a single total, but footnotes indicate that the DESERT WIND had 13,356 riders in June and 17,713 in July. Thus, SF ZEPHYR totals must have been 37,992 in June (up 16.6%) and 42,190 in July (up 26.9%).

COMING NEXT ISSUE:

The results of RTN's latest Reader Train Rating Survey. You may continue to send in your ratings of trains ridden recently, and they will automatically be included in the next survey. See RTN #205 for a rating form.

RAIL CANADA

BUFFALO TO TORONTO passenger service via Conrail and VIA will be discontinued Sep 29 after a decision by the Canadian Transport Commission issued Aug 14. The last trains will depart their points of origin on Sep 28.

SEPTEMBER 29 TIMETABLE will have important changes in transcon service, VIA said. The two transcon trains will go from a 4-day, 3-night operation to a 4-night, 3-day one, and will travel thru the most scenic parts of the Rockies in daylight. There will be evening departures from Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, and morning arrival times in those cities. Transfers between trains at Winnipeg are promised to be more conveniently timed than in the past. Some lengthening of running times will be made. There will be longer stopovers at Winnipeg and Calgary. VIA said that special services offered in these cities will include city bus tours, walking tours, hotel "freshen up" rooms and shopping trips, and on-board meal service while the trains are in the station. Since the CANADIAN will arrive in Montreal in the morning, the eastbound departure of the OCEAN LIMITED to Halifax will be changed to 9pm instead of 11:40pm. A thru connection will also be available to Sydney, N.S. from the OCEAN. CANADIAN passengers at Montreal also will be able to connect with the ATLANTIC for Saint John and Halifax at 6:30pm. Other improvements noted by VIA include morning and evening service between Halifax and Saint John, and same-day roundtrip service between Sydney and Halifax. On the Gaspe coast, a railiner service will speed up travel for all passengers connecting from or to the OCEAN at Matapedia. No significant changes have been made in the schedules of the westbound OCEAN LIMITED or ATLANTIC.

VIA'S CHRISTMAS SPECIAL is expected to leave Toronto at 11am and reach Halifax at 2pm the next day. Returning, it will leave Halifax at 11:20am and arrive in Toronto at 12:20pm the following day. It will bypass Montreal and stop at McAdam, Fredericton Jct, St John, Sussex, Moncton, Sackville, Amherst, Springhill Jct, Truro and Halifax. It is also expected that trains 652 and 655 will be extended thru to Montreal Dec 21 to Jan 4, except for Dec 25, 26, 27 and Jan 3. The Sep 29 timetable should list these schedules.

THE TRANSCONTINENTAL TRAINS will be running the following consists, effective Sep 29: Montreal-Sudbury: 60-seat coach, Dayniter, 4-8-3-1 slpr, 4-4-6 slpr, bag-dorm and Skyline dome. Toronto-Sudbury: coach, Dayniter, two 4-8-4 slprs, 10-6 slpr, baggage, diner. Sudbury-Winnipeg: 2 coaches, Dayniter, 4 slprs, slpr for crew & psgrs, slpr-lounge for crew, baggage, Skyline dome, diner. Winnipeg-Edmonton-Vancouver: 2 coaches, Dayniter, 2 slprs, bag-dorm, cafe lounge, Skyline or Scenerамic dome, diner. Winnipeg-Calgary-Vancouver: 2 coaches, Dayniter, 2 slprs, slpr-lounge, baggage, Skyline dome, diner, crew sleeper. During the Christmas period, Dec 13-Jan 10, cars will be added to these, including 2 slprs on each of the Western legs.

VIA RAIL CANADA'S ridership in the first six months of 1980 was 40% more than the first half of 1976, said VIA's J. Frank Roberts on a radio program Aug 17. VIA's summer was very busy, after a slow spring.

VIA'S EQUIPMENT SHORTAGE won't be resolved very soon, evidently. J. Frank Roberts, speaking on the CBC show "Cross-Country Checkup" on Aug 17, said that it "may be early 1982" when the first LRC train starts on a cross-prairie run for VIA. Roberts stated flatly, "Even if I was given a billion dollars tomorrow morning... I wouldn't know where to spend it because we will not buy more equipment until we are certain of the ten rail sets that we've bought and make sure that those sets are the trainsets that we require. We are not going to be stampeded into buying equipment that we will not require in the longer term. There's an awful lot of basic marketing and planning work to be done..." Countering this view, invited guest Harry Gow of Transport 2000 called in and stated: "...they should start getting more new equipment now, not just 50 LRC cars and 22 locomotives... (and)

something like the SPV-2000." Gow also cited the successful Dominion Atlantic Railway revival: "(the MOT) had criticism of the Dominion Atlantic Railway. Well, Transport 2000 and other intervenors suggested changes and fix-ups. These were done. ...in six months, business has gone up 450%. Now if a dog like that train was can stand up and walk again, ...then I really don't know what they (the MOT) are worrying about." Rail supporters point out that if VIA gets the first LRC's in 1981-2, then two years test would lead to 1982-3, and the first delivery would be in 1984 or 1985--a 4 or 5 year wait for new equipment when the present stuff is 25 years old, inadequate and scarce. Comments one, "Ride the Toronto-Windsor train standing; take a bus or taxi from Sydney to Truro; or sit in a non-air-conditioned commuter coach from Montreal to Chicoutimi--no relief is in sight, because one man doesn't want to order anything until he's sure he needs it.

SILVER AND YELLOW color scheme has been tried recently by VIA on four cars and one locomotive on the Montreal-Ottawa pool. VIA's Frank Roberts said last month that the color scheme will not be pursued because it has low visibility at grade crossings.

ONTARIO TASK FORCE on Provincial Rail Policy issued a news release Aug 18 that quoted the Ontario Ministry of Industry and Tourism as saying "Surveys have indicated clearly that even the Canadian public perceives our rail travel as ... never on time, infrequent, inconvenient, outmoded and the staff frequently incompetent or rude." Two days later, VIA Rail's President Frank Roberts issued a statement rejecting this criticism. He said that the paper on which the statement was based did not survey Canadians at all, but rather was a criticism of rail passenger services in the U.S. Roberts said that VIA employees had been slandered, and that an apology was in order.

WINNIPEG-FARLANE, ONTARIO service is up for abandonment after a long delay. The CTC, on very short notice, was to hear the case in Winnipeg on Sep 8. Users of the train have contacted Transport 2000 for help in saving it.

SUDBURY-WHITE RIVER VIA RDC service will be abandoned by CTC order at the time of change to daylight schedules on the CANADIAN (Sep 29) over the Northern Ontario line. The CBC Radio-Canada (French language) station at Sudbury has contacted Transport 2000 to try to get people on the line to act to defend their right to access. Asks T-2000 rhetorically, "Will an 18-car CANADIAN stop for a lone Indian woman by the track? Will the eastbound CANADIAN be 18 hours late in winter? Will people be killed by freight trains as they walk along the track (as has happened recently in Algonquin Park, where loss of passenger trains has led to track-walking)?"

THAT MOT DOCUMENT recommending passenger train cutbacks and phase-outs (see last issue) has been criticized again in a telegram by Transport 2000 President Harry Gow to Canada's Transport Minister, Jean-Luc Pepin. The telegram asked the Minister if he was really in favor of elimination of sleeping, dining and lounge cars from the SUPER CONTINENTAL, CANADIAN, OCEAN and ATLANTIC. Mr. Gow also objected to cutbacks proposed for regional, local and commuter trains. He asked the Minister also not to order the CTC to "orient" themselves to discontinuances, nor to trim the CTC's powers. (Consumers wishing to air their views may write the Minister or M.P.'s Les Benjamin and Don Mayankowski at: House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Benjamin was responsible for uncovering the secret MOT cutback document.)

THE ST-LAURENT has had its dome car removed. The train will now have just two coaches with a car-end snack bar--no cooked food, no tables for eating, no alcoholic beverages. VIA evidently will save $1000 per day at this cutback, but rail supporters are angered at the "sneaky" way VIA made the changes, especially after all the publicity at the train's inauguration, including use of a Skyline dome.

AN AMTRAK LRC engine undergoing test runs was hit by a truck at Alexandria, Ontario recently, with $50,000 damage resulting. The incident went largely unreported except on local television.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

SAN FRANCISCO'S STREETCAR tracks on Market Street may be saved for future use. When all streetcars are running in the Market Street subway next spring, removal of the tracks above was planned to begin. But on Sep 18 the S.F. Muni Railway suggested a plan for keeping them there and running antique streetcars on them as a tourist attraction. The plan was greeted with approval by city officials so far, perhaps in part because it would cost less for the streetcar operation than the $1-2 million that would have to be spent for track removal. The city already has two old cars that can be used, and it would look for others to purchase. Final approval of the plan is expected in about five months.

LONG ISLAND RAIL ROAD commuters on Sep 3 staged a protest against maintenance conditions on the commuter line. About 30-60% of riders refused to show their tickets while riding, to call attention to their complaints. Railroad president Francis Gabreski rode the trains and said that with more money from the MTA, he could renovate the trains within four years. Advocate Richard Kessel of Long Island organized the protest, which was called successful. One of the commuters' demands is consumer representation on the MTA board.

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION advertises a $26 unlimited-ride Metropass good for a month. The pass requires a passenger to obtain also a photo I.D. at a cost of $1.50. Information on the pass is available in Toronto at 484-4544.

BART'S TRANSBAY TUBE had a small leak that was discovered around Sep 1. The leak let in about eight gallons of water per hour. It was repaired about two weeks later at a cost of $8,000. Some incorrect newspaper reports said that it would cost $1 million to fix. A Wall Street Journal article of Sep 8 called BART the perpetrator of "A $1.3 million transit improvement in which man emerges triumphant", poking fun at its manual cab signalling system that should be installed by next August, which allows manual train operation without the necessity of automatic control failure first.

CHICAGO'S LA SALLE Street Station will be torn down for redevelopment, decided a a federal district court judge who signed an order Sep 8 allowing the demolition to proceed. Actual demolition must wait upon approval of financing for the 25-story office building planned for the Rock Island's property.

SAN DIEGO TROLLEY line got its first two cars on Aug 28 when the two red vehicles were trucked into San Diego from Long Beach, where they had been shipped by the Dusseldorf, West Germany manufacturer. Cars will be on display in San Diego in street fairs on Oct 5 and 12. Managing director of the line will be Langley C. Powell, who is now assistant manager of rail maintenance for MARTA in Atlanta.

HOUSTON WANTS TO build a 13-mile "heavy rail" commuter system in the Westpark corridor of southwest Houston. The $1 billion plan was announced Aug 27. The area's Metropolitan Transit Authority is seeking federal funding for the line, which would include 1.4 miles of downtown subway.

CALIFORNIA TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT in late August recommended that the state Transportation Commission allocate $15.3 million for the Caltrans-SP rail commuter line between San Francisco and San Jose. $13.2 million would be for new equipment, $120,000 for painting cars, and $2 million for track rehabilitation. The amount was part of $34.7 million for seven mass transit projects, including $11.5 million for building a second track along 9.2 miles of the San Diego Trolley line.

SLEEPERS ON THE DESERT WIND

RTN correspondent Peter Putnam Bretz was on hand to ride the first westbound run of the sleeping car on the DESERT WIND on Aug 4 from Ogden to Los Angeles. (He got there by leaving Eugene, Oregon after the inaugural run of the WILLAMETTE VALLEY--see last issue--by taking the first northbound revenue run of the latter train from Eugene to Portland on Aug 3 (actually that run, train 796, is called the MOUNT RAINIER, since it goes all the way to Seattle). The consist was the same as the inaugural train, minus the business car "Airslie". From Portland Pete took the PIONEER to Ogden to catch the DESERT WIND.

The PIONEER reached Ogden 15 minutes early, and Pete found the following DESERT WIND equipment waiting to board: engine 229, baggage cars 1158 & 1261, Superliner coaches 34004 & 34085, Hi-level transition car 39920, Amdinette 20229, and sleeper 2988 "Pine Dale". There was no particular celebration over this improvement in service. Pete's personal count showed four roomettes occupied, and one bedroom. Pete himself occupied roomette 6.

No porter was available, so Pete carried his own baggage in. The baggage cars weren't actually on yet when Pete boarded, and to put them on the train's power had to be cut off. This took about a half hour until the engine was again coupled on and hotel power could flow into the cars once more. The train was delayed 30 minutes beyond its 11:45pm departure time because the PIONEER had some trouble leaving Salt Lake City.

Our correspondent reported that he slept well, waking up briefly as the train stopped in Milford, where there is an attractive station. By the time the train reached Las Vegas, he was up and watching another Superliner coach being added to the train. The air conditioning worked well, and the arrival at Los Angeles was on time.

Later, an RTN reader reported to Pete that about two weeks after Pete's trip, he also boarded the DESERT WIND in Ogden, with its newly-rebuilt electrified sleeper. While he was aboard the sleeper awaiting departure, he discovered that there

The Winning Way to Travel

was no water in the car. He could see that the water hose was only 20 feet away, and a couple of car-knockers were sitting around, talking. An Amtrak supervisor was also on the platform. The reader, a man knowledgeable about railroads, told the supervisor of the problem, but instead of remedying it, the Amtrak man openly criticized the passenger, in front of other Amtrak passengers, for demanding water, telling him that it was the fault of the car ("It's 30 years old! It's broken and worn out!"). But the knowledgeable passenger persisted. He was able to telephone a Union Pacific maintenance foreman in the car yards, and finally water was put in the car. The passenger could not resist returning to the Amtrak supervisor who had insisted that the sloppy provisioning was the fault of a "broken-down" sleeping car, and giving him back the criticism that had so unjustly been bestowed upon him.

Says Pete, shaking his head, "Can you imagine the sleeper going all the way to Los Angeles without water just because some work crew members were a little lazy? Well, I can imagine it where Amtrak maintenance is involved." Pete then brings up the nuisance of improperly replaced window panes in many cars. The glass is, of course, supposed to be installed on the outside and the Lexan on the inside to avoid scratching it. But local Amtrak maintenance men frequently install the panes the wrong way around when they get broken, resulting in scratched and opaque windows. Pete found that most of the windows in his sleeper "Pine Dale" were okay, but random roomette windows showed the exterior scratches.

A SUMMARY OF 403(b) ROUTES - CURRENT STATUS

State	Route	In service	Pending
California	Los Angeles-San Diego (3 roundtrips)*		
	Los Angeles-San Diego (4th roundtrip)		*
	Oakland-Bakersfield (2 roundtrips) *		
	Sacramento-Oakland-L.A.		*
	Oakland-Bakersfield-L.A.		*
Illinois	Chicago-Champaign/Urbana	*	
	Chicago-Dubuque	*	
	Chicago-Springfield	*	
	Chicago-Quincy	*	
	Chicago-Peoria	*	
Massachusetts	Boston-Springfield (New Haven-NYC)		*
Michigan	Chicago-Port Huron	*	
	Detroit-Jackson	*	
	Grand Rapids-Chicago		*
	Jackson-Kalamazoo		*
	Grand Rapids-Detroit		*
Minnesota	St.Paul/Minneapolis-Duluth	*	
Missouri	St.Louis-Kansas City	*	
New York	Albany-Montreal	*	
North Carolina	Raleigh-Charlotte		*
	Norfolk, Va.-Asheville, N.C.		*
Oregon	Portland-Eugene	*	
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia-Harrisburg	*	
	Philadelphia-Pittsburg	*	
	Pittsburgh-Altoona		*
	Scranton-Hoboken,N.J.		*
	Newark,N.J.-Bethlehem-Harrisburg		*
	Scranton-Bethlehem-Philadelphia		*
Virginia	Washington, D.C.-Newport News		*
Georgia	Atlanta-Savannah (Brunswick, Ga.)		*

In addition, preliminary discussions have also been held on routes within the states of Florida, Iowa, Oklahoma, Missouri, Vermont, Maryland, and Minnesota.

A TALE OF TWO RAILROADS

Visiting a Pair of Western Tourist Lines

By Sylvia and Ted Blishak

IF you were born before 1940, you can remember how those long-gone, lonesome train whistles sounded, the way the ground trembled under your feet when a mighty, steamy monster with huge wheels and driving rods thundered by. If you're a member of the younger generation, you missed the era of steam! Trains sounded different then, and they were living, breathing machines that people could relate to! They chuffed wonderfully while smoke billowed from their stacks, steam hissed, and their big brass bells clanged.

There are some steam passenger trains still in existence, but like many tourist attractions in the 1980's, they face an uncertain future, since gasoline prices and inflation are keeping drivers closer to home. We'd been wanting for some time to experience riding two railroads renowned for trackage thru some of the most beautiful mountain scenery in the U.S.--the Silverton and Durango in Colorado, and the Cumbres and Toltec in New Mexico. This year we decided to procrastinate no longer.

Exhausted by the miracles of the jet age, we arrive in Durango in our rented car as the sun is low in the sky. Suddenly the jaunty profile of the steam locomotive returning from Silverton appears before our tired eyes like a dream, and the jet age is behind us!

After checking in at the General Palmer House Hotel, a beautifully-preserved old building right next to the depot, we enjoy a dinner of fresh trout at the Palace Restaurant, which features fine food, excellent service, and authentic turn-of-the-century decor. Such elegance in a little country town is a nice surprise!

Darkness falls over the railroad yards. The moon glows behind scudding clouds. We see a bright glow from the open roundhouse door, and walk over to investigate. Inside, a steam engine shudders and hisses quietly as a maintenance crew prepares it for tomorrow's run. 1980 seems a long way off. Tomorrow, the brochure promises, we will experience a "Narrow-Gauge Train Trip to Yesterday."

The Silverton and Durango Branch of the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad is a living heirloom where the West is still wild, and old-time steam trains still climb into the mighty Rocky Mountains. During the last century, narrow gauge railroad tracks (laid only 36 inches apart) crossed 42 states and extended 16,000 miles thruout the U.S. (The narrow gauge permitted sharper curves and steeper grades thru rugged terrain.) When silver was discovered in the Rocky Mountains, miners needed the railroad to bring their supplies in and the ore out. Passengers could enjoy a luxurious Pullman sleeper on the 30-hour run between Denver and Silverton in the 1880's! Many of the little mountain towns could be reached only by train. This changed only in recent years when route 550, Colorado's "Million Dollar Highway", was built. Historically, highway access has made railroads redundant, but the Silverton and Durango branch, a remnant of this once vast rail system, is alive and well as a tourist railroad. Oddly enough, the sturdy little steam engines keep pulling their bright wooden passenger cars more by virtue of popular demand than by design of the D&RGW Railroad, the owning company which is, in fact, now trying to sell the branch line. The attractions of scenic beauty, Western history, and the magic lure of the steam locomotive were enough for word-of-mouth publicity. People from far away began coming to Durango to ride the train. In the early 1950's it ran only twice weekly. Now, in 1980, with two daily trains scheduled during the peak summer season, seats are often sold out weeks in advance.

July 21: We awake at sunup when we hear chuffs and whistles as the locomotive scheduled to pull the first morning train to Silverton strolls out of the yards and couples onto its train of 10 bright yellow coaches. We're at trackside at

8:30 when the train puffs away under a plume of coal smoke and a rain of cinders. There is much excitement as tourists scurry about to get the best camera angles. Many of the children in the crowd are seeing, hearing and smelling their first steam engine! We're already aboard and admiring the beautifully varnished oak interior of our antique wooden coach when the cry of "All aboard" sounds for the second train's departure at 9:30. The whistle gives two steamy moans, and we're off! We head north thru the charming little town, which, wedged between high mountain walls, has been carefully restored to a trendy, old-fashioned motif. Even the late-breakfast crowd lined up for Egg McMuffins are standing in front of an 1890's style McDonalds.

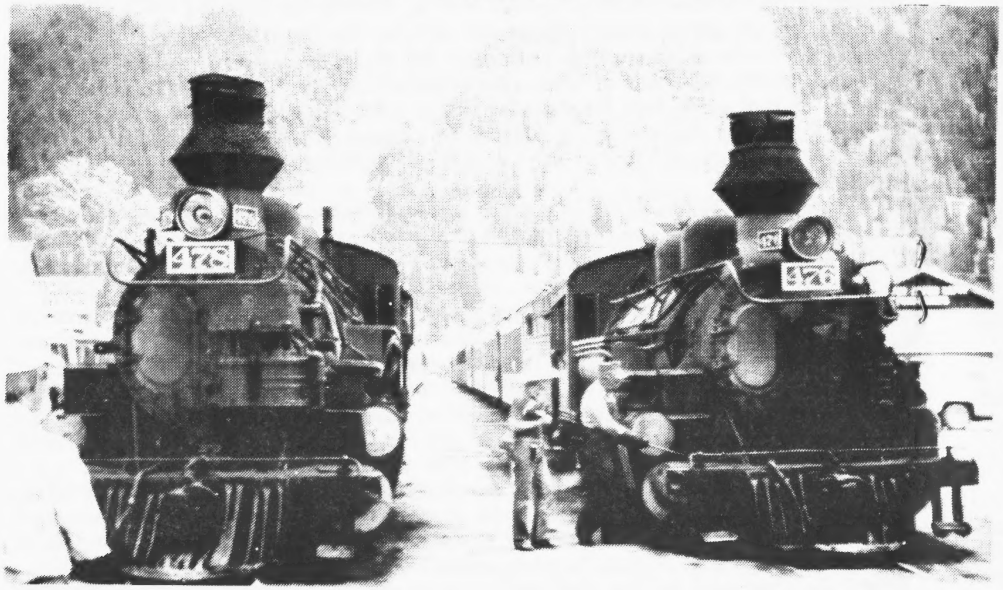
Soon we are in the midst of a green valley dotted with farms and livestock, and also, unfortunately, some unattractive trailer courts. As we begin our climb into the mountains, we encounter some sharply curving track with grades as steep as 2½%. We enjoy a good view of our engine, no. 478, laboring and huffing up ahead with dark smoke pouring out of its diamond stack. Colorful wildflowers abound as we follow the route of the Animas River, which rushes below us in a deep gorge as our climb continues. We traverse a ledge, narrowly perched on the granite cliffs, where the ends of the ties are only inches away from the edge of a dizzying abyss! Early Spanish explorers called this the River of Lost Souls. We stop while our engine takes water from the spout of an old-fashioned wooden water tower, and we know our journey into the past is well under way!

The 13,000-foot Needle Mountains appear on our right, and occasional waterfalls cascade down to the river. Aspen trees ripple and shimmer among the pines climbing the mountain slopes. Perched as precariously as they must be in this rugged country, the tracks have suffered occasional damage from washouts and snow slides, and the remains of twisted steel rails can be seen glinting in the sun just under the surface of the rushing river.

While the scenery is becoming more spectacular, we are unable to see as much of it as we'd like from our coach because the windows are not high enough. (It is possible to reserve seats in open cars, and we wish now that we had.) We can see the tops of the snow-covered peaks only by sitting right next to the window and pressing our faces against it. We move to the open vestibules for a better view, but find them crowded with people with the same idea. The cinders from the smokestack collect on the coach roofs and roll right off onto our heads.

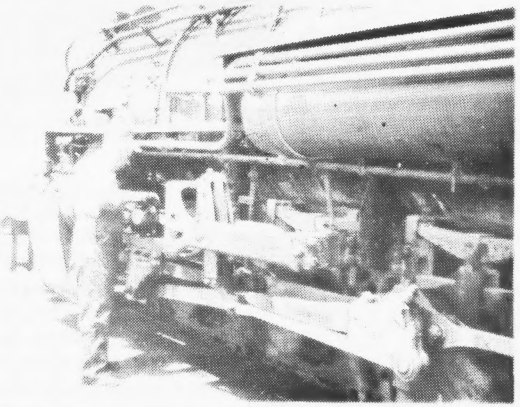
Climbing from Durango's 6520-foot elevation to a lofty 9300 feet in 3½ hours, we arrive at Silverton. This is an authentic looking Wild West town with only one paved street. The town lies in a flat area with mountains slanting steeply up like the inside of a bowl. Mine tailings hug the flanks of the mountains. The town not only looks like a movie set, it has been used for one. "Ticket to Tomahawk" was filmed here, as was "Denver and Rio Grande" starring Edmund O'Brien. If you've seen the latter, you won't have forgotten that two steam engines were wrecked in a head-on collision--and no, they didn't use models!

We stop alongside the train that left Durango ahead of us, pulled by engine 476. The twin locomotives stand simmering shoulder to shoulder, while a trainman in overalls and striped engineer's hat tends to the side-rod bearings with a giant oilcan. The engines were built by the American Locomotive Company in 1923. When viewed from head-on, they have a peculiar appearance. The high diamond stack is covered with wire mesh to keep large cinders from starting fires. Just above the boiler, the hooded amber eye of the headlight peers forward over the number plate.



At Silverton, Colorado, the two trains that have run up from Durango that morning pause for a lunch stop, and a trainman oils critical engine bearings. Rio Grande trains run daily from late May until early October, while the Cumbres & Toltec's operating season is mid-June until Columbus Day. Photos by the authors.

WHERE TO CONTACT THE RAILROADS:
Silverton and Durango: Rio Grande Railroad c/o Agent - Rio Grande Depot, 479 Main Ave., Durango, CO 82301. (303) 247-2733.
Cumbres and Toltec: Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Box 789, Chama NM 87520. (505) 756-2151.



A confusion of pipes, air pumps, and compressed-air cylinders clutter the left front of the engine, and the Lima bean-shaped smoke box door is on the right side. This untidy arrangement is underscored by a cow catcher. Another unusual design feature is the outside frame arrangement, with driving rods and wheels inside and barely visible. Definitely not built for beauty, they do have a rather charming, story book profile.

After a lunch stop at one of the 16 restaurants in this little "ghost town", we're back aboard at 3pm for the downhill journey. The return trip is uneventful, and we seem to be going very slowly--a suspicion confirmed as we puff along the meadows outside Durango and are rapidly passed by two children on galloping horses! (It is possible to make the return trip by bus. This gets you back an hour earlier and takes you thru some different scenery--even if you're a railfan, we'd advise it.)

The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad was once a part of the Rio Grande system. Freight trains ran on this narrow gauge section until the mid-1960's; after that, the Rio Grande planned to abandon the line and scrap the tracks. But railfans banded together in an attempt to preserve the line, and convinced the states of Colorado and New Mexico to purchase the 64-mile route between Chama and Antonito, which they did in 1971. A private firm, Scenic Railways, Inc., of Sunnyvale, California, was hired to operate the railroad as a tourist attraction. The line is a success, and like the Denver and Rio Grande, is usually sold out weeks ahead. The railroad management is interested in preserving and restoring their stations and equipment, and has received grants from the federal government for this purpose.

July 22: We awake at dawn for the 100-mile drive from Durango to Chama, arriving at the remote little New Mexico town at 9am. We're just in time to join a guided tour of the yards, and find ourselves surrounded by the largest collection of narrow gauge rolling stock in the U.S. It is a bizarre-looking assortment: rotary snowplows, a pile driver, cattle cars, ice box cars, a Jordan Spreader, and a huge flat car with a crane on it.

"This," our guide explains, "is for bringing home the wrecks! The crane can life derailed cars or engines onto the flatcar."

This line owns 13 engines, not all of them operationsl, but there is a shop here at Chama where two engines have been restored, and another is scheduled for completion this year. One of these, a tiny green 2-4-2 "Columbia" locomotive rescued from the scrapyards in Hawaii, turned out to be "the little engine that couldn't"--it doesn't have even enough power to take itself up the Cumbres grade!

The line's "workhorses" are identical machines built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works at Philadelphia in 1925. These are 2-8-2 "Mikado" types. Three other 2-8-2 locomotives were converted to narrow gauge engines from standard gauge, originally built in 1903. These are not presently operated. Another engine, an old 2-8-2 donated to the Town of Antonito by Gene Autry may soon be restored and placed in service. One diesel engine, imported from Hawaii, switches at Chama and powers work trains.

We are introduced to a coal tipple, a two-spigot water tower, and a sand-processing plant. The sand is heated, dried, and filtered to make sure that it will flow smoothly. Lots of it is needed for traction of the 4% grade to Cumbres Pass! Our guide shows us a repaired brick wall in the roundhouse, where, she claims, "A steam engine decided to walk away one night and went thru the wall. We chain the wheels now!" The tour is fascinating, like being a part of living history--and our guide explains most of the incredible-looking equipment in understandable terms while infecting us with what must be the adventurous spirit of working on this railroad.

The conductor calls, "All aboard for the NEW MEXICO EXPRESS" and we climb into a converted wooden boxcar, built in 1904. Wooden steps, like gangways, fold up into the middle of the car as we prepare to get under way. The attitude of the Scenic, Inc. employees seems quite different from that of their counterparts at the Silverton and Durango. Scenic isn't just carrying people from place to place in a routine manner--this trip is an event! A TV camera crew from Albuquerque climbs aboard to film the train ride.

The Cumbres and Toltec Scenic Railroad. (Railroad photo.)

The conductor welcomes us over a public address system, and periodically explains some of the history of the railroad and brings points of interest to our attention. He explains our "consist", which includes more than our train.

"About half a mile ahead of us will be a motorized scout car to look for boulders on the tracks", he explains. Since we have an unusually heavy passenger load today, two big coal-burning Baldwin engines will head the train. Our coaches feature huge windows from armrest height up to the ceiling, so view are unobstructed. The cars are painted a redwood tone, with the colorful C&TS RR logo on the side. "When we were just getting started and money was scarce, railfans from all over the country volunteered to spend their summer vacations painting these coaches", we are informed.

Bravely bringing up the rear of our parade is a second speeder car, bright yellow, festooned with a dune buggy flag, and equipped with a 30-gallon water tank and a hose. "The operator's job is to extinguish fires that the cinders from the engines might start", the conductor explains.

With a "toot-toot-toot" from each engine, our journey begins. (Over the mountains at Antonito, Colorado, the COLORADO LIMITED will be pulling out too. The two trains will meet at the mountaintop for a lunch stop.)

After a short climb, the conductor explains that we are approaching a 100-year-old steel trestle. "We'll stop here and uncouple the helper engine so it can cross separately. We don't want the combined weight of these engines--at 286,000 pounds each--on the bridge at the same time!" There are lots of chuffs and whistles as each engine crawls across in turn, and then we couple up again and the steep, 4% climb begins in earnest.

This is wide-open-space country, with stretches of meadows, quaking aspens, and rocky crags. We can see for miles, and except for an occasional cabin and a lone fisherman, no signs of civilization appear except when our route crosses Highway 17. Here we find a crowd of railfans and photographers are "pacing" us and stopping at each grade crossing. At one point, we count 22 vehicles pulled over to watch us pass. After all, we are riding behind a double-headed steam train--and where else in the world can you find one of those? One of our pacers is a railroad employee dressed in red shirt and jeans, and at each crossing she appears with her red flag to stop highway traffic for us.

After some steep, twisting track (and some delightful "stack-talk" duets from our engines) we reach the Cumbres Summit at 10,015 feet. We have climbed from 7863 feet at Chama in one hour, 10 minutes! Our helper engine now uncouples and backs around the train to head back to Chama, and we continue thru high meadow country where scenes from the movie "Bite the Bullet" were filmed. This is open

range land, and a big black cow standing on the tracks causes our train to pause while the cow studies the engine, looks back at the rest of the herd, and wanders off the track. The entire herd now ambles across in front of us to join the leader, while our engine huffs impatiently!

When we arrive at Osier, Colorado, a hot catered lunch awaits us. We pull up under an antique water tower just as the motorized scout car for the COLORADO LIMITED arrives. We fill our plates with hot beef, beans and salad. As we're enjoying our meal at a picnic table, a whistle echoes thru the mountains, and the other train, looking like a toy in the distance, comes around the mountain and hisses to a halt. Suddenly, the sun is blotted out by low, black clouds and ear-splitting thunderclaps rumble thru the peaks. As soon as we are back in our coach, rain and hail begin to fall, so we pull up our big glass windows. The two trains have traded engines, and with a locomotive on the other end of our train, we head back towards Chama.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

THE LAKE CITIES, trains 352-353, between Chicago and Toledo, began operation on Aug 3 with the recent timetable change. The new run is an extension of the Chicago-Detroit SAINT CLAIR to Toledo. On Sep 1 the consist of the new train looked like this (train 352): Turboclub 60, Turbodinette 91, Turbocoaches 90, 92, 61. On that date 55 passengers made the across-the-platform transfer to the LAKE SHORE LIMITED, while the former Greyhound Bustrak connection carried only from 3 to 15 passengers to Toledo. On this date the train reached Toledo 5 minutes early. Obviously, this extension to Toledo will benefit the ridership of the LAKE SHORE.....

THE HOOSIER STATE, the Chicago-Indianapolis train, now has a firm startup date of Oct 1. The first run begins in Indianapolis, as this is a one-trainset train. The equipment for the first run, which will be a revenue run in addition to an inaugural, is to be deadheaded from Chicago on Sep 29. First-run equipment will be two 84-seat Amcoaches, one 56-seat Amcafe, and observation car 10,000 bearing a drumhead "The HOOSIER STATE" and a stylized map of Indiana. Amtrak says it has a potential overcrowding problem on the first run, as it is not known how many passengers and guests will show up for the unreserved-seat train. The train will become an Amtrak "shop train", hauling cars to Beech Grove Shops for repair in addition to carrying passengers. Regular consist of the train will be one 56-seat Amcafe and one 44-seat HEP rebuilt coach. The HEP coach is used because it is adaptable to the deadheads that the train will pull. Prior to the startup, Amtrak has been running regular shop trains Monday nights and Tuesday mornings. When wrecked cars are to be moved, requiring a slow speed limit, they will require a freight movement to transport them to Indianapolis. An Amtrak spokesman said that deadhead cars might sometimes be used for overflow passengers if they are in good condition (the cars, that is).....

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THE NORTHBOUND MONTREALER derailed at 11:20am on Aug 18 after it was struck in the left side by a 10-ton dump truck loaded with crushed rock. The crash occurred at Rang de la Bataille Sud street seven miles southwest of LaPrairie, Quebec. The train had been due in Montreal at 11:10am, but was running late because of delays at customs inspection. The truck hit the second engine of the Amfleet train, derailing eight of the 11 cars, and also, apparently, the engines. No one was killed in the messy-appearing crackup, but 13 people reported minor injuries. The truck driver had only minor cuts and bruises, altho his vehicle was demolished. Repairs to the single-track CN line were expected to take about two days.....

THE PRAIRIE MARKSMAN, newly-inaugurated Chicago-Peoria train (see last issue), is gradually building up ridership. Planners hoped for about 75 passengers per trip, and in mid-September it was running most days in the high 60's and low 70's, with an occasional foray up to 95.....

SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR will be all-Superliner before Oct 1. The fourth set of new Superliner cars went into service out of Chicago on Sep 18. The fifth set is scheduled to leave Chicago on Sep 20, and the sixth and final set is scheduled to depart Chicago on Sep 27. The last run of conventional cars would leave Chicago on Sep 24. The EMPIRE BUILDER began tri-weekly operation on Sep 15, freeing up some Superliner equipment to place on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR.....

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OCTOBER 26 CHANGES coming for Amtrak (at the time of the fall changeover to Standard Time): A seventh SAN DIEGAN train is projected for that time, if Caltrans approves; as we go to press, Caltrans has not okayed the train because it will require that SAN DIEGAN running times be lengthened--five trains would take 2hrs, 45mins for the trip, and two of them would do it in 2:40 (present running time is 2:35 for most trains). Amtrak said that the lengthened times would be "interim" until track improvements were made, expected by Apr 1981. The COAST STARLIGHT will get its stop at Chemult, Oregon, reaching there northbound at 7:26am and southbound at 9:48pm. Chemult is between Eugene and Klamath Falls in resort and vacation country. More fall schedule changes will be reported later as they become available.....

THE PANAMA LIMITED, train 58 northbound, on Sep 1 plowed thru a herd of cattle just south of Brookhaven MS, as it traveled at about 80mph. Two or three of the animals were killed. The lead engine suffered a broken angle cock. The train proceeded to Brookhaven station, where it was met by a welding crew. Repairs were made in 41 minutes, for a total delay of 58 minutes. Consist of the train was: engines 722 (P30), 225 (F40); cars 1224, 2449 "Maple Grove", 20205, 21878, 21863, 21852, 21155, 21072.....

A MEXICAN TRAIN southbound on the Sonora-Baja California Railroad derailed 20 miles south of Mexicali near the California border. At least 15 people were killed and 80 injured in the Aug 27 wreck. The engine and six coaches derailed and overturned into a canal near Ejido Puebla as the train traveled at about 50mph. A work crew ahead of the train had pulled their handcar off the mainline and into a siding as the train approached, but they did not get the switch to the siding closed in time. The train's engineer and firemen were among the dead. Five Americans were among those injured.....

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VIA RAIL CANADA'S E&N Dayliner on Vancouver Island was reduced to one RDC car instead of two for two days following a July 13 accident that put car 9067 out of service. On that date, a motorist struck the train at a grade crossing in Victoria at 5:10pm, damaging the entry steps of the RDC and demolishing the vehicle. Passengers had to crowd into RDC #9064 while 9067 was repaired.....

THE SOUTHWEST LIMITED is going to pot, riders report. A New Mexico reader reports a sleeper with no lights, water, or air conditioning; and the conductor never attempted to find passengers a more satisfactory accommodation. "Strictly third class service for first class price", the reader concludes. Rail supporters are becoming more suspicious that Amtrak is trying to run the SOUTHWEST LIMITED into the ground so it can eventually be dropped. They cite the fact that Amtrak ridership figures combine the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR and DESERT WIND into one, pretending they are a single train when they are not. The combined train shows big ridership decreases, while the SOUTHWEST is allowed to show mediocre performance. "Rotten", is a reader's adjective for the SOUTHWEST after riding it this summer--"This train has deteriorated badly since last year".....

FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION'S proposal to reduce passenger train speeds, detailed in RTN late last year (issue #196) has been abandoned after sharp opposition by Amtrak, NARP and the railroads.....

VALLEY RAILROAD COMPANY diesel shuttle train began operation Aug 1 carrying passengers between the Amtrak station at Old Saybrook CT and the Valley's steam excursion train terminal at Essex CT. Shuttle trains and steam trains run daily except Monday and Friday thru Oct 26.....

AMTRAK'S NIGHT OWL was delayed in leaving Washington Aug 27 after three bomb threats were phoned in by women. One caller said that a bomb had been placed aboard the overnight train "in memory of the Shah". The train's 250 passengers were taken off the train while it was searched. No bomb was found, and the train left Washington at 1:30am on the 28th, three hours late.....

Photo by George Hyko

AMTRAK'S THREE TURBO-TRAINS are up for sale, the corporation said in a Sep 9 announcement. Amtrak will take bids on the United Aircraft-built trainsets, one of which is seen in the photo at left in its original paint scheme. The trains are stored at Amtrak's 30th ST. station in Philadelphia. One trainset consists of two power cars and two coaches and each of the other two consists of two power cars and three coaches. Each one has a snack bar. The Turbos, built in 1967, have been out of service since 1978. VIA Rail Canada still uses Turbo-Trains of the same type.....

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PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS STATION will be moved by Amtrak within the next 3-6 months from its present suburban location on outer East Street to a downtown location on Depot Street, approximately on the site of the old Boston & Albany Railroad Freight House, about one block from the Greyhound station, about 100 feet from the main route of all Berkshire Regional Transit Authority bus lines serving the entire county, and less than a block from the downtown Hilton Hotel complex. The move was suggested by Congressman Silvio O. Conte, ranking Republican on the House Appropriations Committee. The city will lease the land to Amtrak for $1 per year, and has applied for a $36,000 UMTA grant to cover marketing, site studies, design and engineering work for a combination rail-bus multimodal transportation center to be built near the site.....

DECATUR, ILLINOIS IS now the largest city in its state without rail service, since Peoria is now served by Amtrak, and the political wheels will be turning again. Watch for an announcement around the first of the year that Amtrak and the state to extend the ILLINI, trains 380-381, to Decatur. Plans call for the train to continue south from Champaign to Inscola, Illinois on ICG rails and over toe Decatur via N&W.....

THE NATIONAL LIMITED should be reinstated as part of the basic system funded by the federal government, said the Board of the Ohio Rail Transportation Authority on Sep 10 in unanimous approval of a resolution. The resolution said that the NATIONAL was discontinued last year in order to enable Amtrak to start new politically desirable trains in other parts of the system. While Amtrak is asking the nine affected states to support a new NATIONAL as a 403(b) train, the ORTA Board

called the use of state money for this purpose a "misapplication of the 403(b) federal legislation." ORTA said that at the time of the train's discontinuance, its ridership compared very favorably with other trains that were retained in Amtrak's basic system, and the train was booked so heavily that thousands of prospective customers were turned away. The resolution stated that "In a continuing climate of long-term fuel shortages and rising energy costs, an important alternative in regional transportation was eliminated".....

THE AMTRAK CRESCENT is fast gaining on the COAST STARLIGHT for the title of most heavily-patronized long distance train in the Amtrak system (see ridership figures, page 4). In figures for the three most recent months, the COLONIAL had the highest total, but it is primarily a NE Corridor train. In June the CRESCENT had the highest percentage increase of any Amtrak train or route--74.6%, and in July the gain was again a very sizable 70.3%. The May gain of 72.9% was accomplished with some of Amtrak's poorest equipment. With newly rebuilt "Heritage Fleet" equipment on the train now, ridership should remain strong.....

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SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, train 5, had a fire in its Superliner diner on Aug 11 west of Fairfield CA. The fire was caused by an electrical short in the wiring. A passenger said that at first all the lights on the train began flickering, and then there was a call over the train's P.A. system that there was a fire in the diner. Trainmen radioed the engineer to cut off the head end power, and fire extinguishers were taken to the diner. The train made an emergency stop in a 70mph zone, at milepost 44 at about 4pm. A grass fire beside the tracks began from sparks from the train fire. The fire was extinguished in the car fairly readily, but a local fire department responding to the grass fire got mired in a swamp for a time. The head end power was unplugged just forward of the diner, and the train proceeded with battery lighting in the rear cars and slightly flat wheels. An ambulance was standing by upon arrival at Oakland for one of the cooks who apparently was somewhat affected by the smoke, which had billowed from the car profusely.....

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THE AMTRAK CRESCENT was to get a third set of HEP "Heritage Fleet" cars about the middle of September, and the fourth and final set is expected the first week in October.....

THE SOUTHWEST LIMITED was delayed 3½ hours eastbound on arrival at Kansas City on Aug 30 because of a Santa Fe freight derailment at 7:30am the previous day that put seven cars on the ground at Sands NM, 33 miles west of Las Vegas NM. The westbound train was delayed two hours at Raton. Consist of the eastbound train was engines 517, 502, 531; cars deadhead dome 9454, 1350, 1093, 9992, 2265 "Placid Scene", 2760 "Palm Top", 2555 "Steel City", 9933, 9957, 9984, 9974, 9960, 9961, 9923.....

MEXICAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS train 8, enroute from Ciudad Juarez to Mexico City, derailed on Jul 21 just north of the Leon station, as it was running 1½ hours late. A passing freight train derailed and hit the third car from the end, a sleeper, totally demolishing two roomettes. Two passengers were injured by broken glass. The three sleepers and diner were detached, and the train continued on, arriving Mexico City 7½ hours late. The consist was: engines 7241, 9411, 9217; cars 2463 baggage, 2961 RPO, 1435 express, coaches 4794, 4280, 4428, 4382, 4274, 4481, diner "Uruapan", sleepers "Monte Aconcagua", "Monte McKinley", and "Monte Verde".....

PADDED SCHEDULE DEPARTMENT: How's this for schedule padding on the INTER-AMERICAN? A reader rode the train Aug 24-25 and reports it left Laredo on time, but was 51mins late by Austin. It made up 39 minutes by Taylor 34 miles later, but was 42mins late by Temple because of waiting for a freight on the Katy. It Arrived Fort Worth on time. By Texarkana it was 35mins late, but on time at Little Rock. It arrived St. Louis one hour early! Total: over three hours lost and made up.....

THE MONTREALER SOUTH from Montreal Aug 16 reportedly departed with no food in the Amdinette--Canadian customs regulations were blamed. The car was partially stocked in St. Albans. At breakfast the next morning, all three entrees were unavailable.....

AMTRAK'S FAMILY DAYS at Los Angeles Sep 13 & 14 saw somewhere between 45,000 and 60,000 visitors. On Oct 4 and 5 a similar Family Day ceremony will be held at Amtrak's Indianapolis station.....

THE SAN JOAQUIN'S Stockton-Sacramento bus connection became a guaranteed connection on Sep 15. Greyhound operates it.....

FORMER SP SLEEPERS that are being rebuilt by Amtrak into head end power cars are getting names--something they never had under their original railroad owner. The following names are known so far: 2443 "Walnut Grove", 2448 "Oak Grove", 2449 "Maple Grove" (see consist of PANAMA LIMITED, page 16), 2450 "Beech Grove", and 2451 "Birch Grove". (Does anyone have a photo of SP sleeper 9007 with its number plate clearly visible?).....

THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY is being promoted for Amtrak and the state of Oregon by Petzold & Associates agency in Portland. The train's first ad campaign cost $60,000. The agency has held Oregon's tourism account since 1977.....

THE PUBLISHER OF "California Camper", a monthly travel and camping newspaper, is a train supporter who prints free ads for Amtrak in his publication.....

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AIR CANADA BLITZES the U.S. with singing commercials: "We can take you any day, yes we can/Flying from the USA, yes we can/For business or for play, from Vancouver to Gaspe/Yes we can, Air Canada can/ (chorus:) And since Canada is our home/We can show you a Canada you've never known/Yes we can, Air Canada, yes we can!" (There! We passed it on to you--now maybe we can forget it.) Haven't heard any VIA Rail Canada ads here yet.....

A FIFTH AEM-7 electric locomotive was delivered to Amtrak in late August--unit no. 904.....

A TANK TRUCK of gasoline overturned near the NE Corridor tracks in Bensalem Township PA on Aug 8 at evening rush hour, causing Amtrak and Conrail commuter trains to be halted while the mess was cleaned up.....

THE AMTRAK BOARD of Directors on Aug 27 approved the building of a $1 million diesel locomotive overhaul shop at the Beech Grove, Indiana rolling stock repair facility. Amtrak said the project will save up to $25,000 per unit for the 10 plus diesels that will be overhauled there each year. It will be financed thru a reallocation of existing funds. Completion of the facility is projected for Jul 1981..

AMTRAK POLICE OFFICER encountered two men and a woman who apparently were putting together a bomb under an Amtrak railroad bridge at Newark DE on Aug 28. Four Amtrak Corridor trains were delayed while police removed the bomb materials.....

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LOS ANGELES STATION is to be purchased by the California Dept. of Transportation. A July 17 news conference at the station attended by the Governor, Mayor of L.A., and Caltrans director gave the announcement. Actual acquisition of the property is targeted for mid-1981, with cost estimated to be $18 million. Proposed developments include renovation of the station buildings, reopening of the restaurant and relocation of the Trailways bus loading area to the north end. Portions of the station would be demolished to allow extension of the El Monte Busway west from Mission Road to Alameda Street and to provide shop facilities for the proposed L.A. Downtown People Mover, one of whose terminals would be immediately east of LAUPT, in a People Mover/Busway intercept structure including a 5-story auto park and Amtrak ticketing facility. After the conference, a counter-conference denouncing the inclusion of the People Mover maintenance facility was held by the Los Angeles Conservancy, Sierra Club, NAACP and Coalition for Rapid Transit. Citizens for Rail California withdrew from the counter-conference at the last minute.....

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: On page 7 of the last issue, the date of the last run of the PEORIA ROCKET should be 1978 instead of 1979. In issue 206 on page 16 the last item mentions the "8444" in error instead of the "4449". On page 17 of the same issue the picture caption was omitted: it should have indicated that the scene is just outside of Penn Station in New York, the only open-air portion of Corridor tracks in New York City.....

A BUDD SPV-2000 and a Milwaukee Road instruction car ran a test run Milwaukee-Oconomowoc WI on Aug 7 on the route of the old CANNONBALL.....

COMING IN DECEMBER: The 10th Anniversary issue of RTN! Be sure to be on hand for this exciting issue. Note to advertisers: Please reserve your ad space early for this special issue. Deadline for display ads will be mid-November.

RTN SUBSCRIPTION RATE will be forced upward within the coming months because of the coming massive increase in first class postal rates that is expected to take effect shortly after the first of the year. We expect that the single-issue price will go from 65¢ to 75¢ (a price already charged by other rail newsletters), and the yearly rate for 24 issues will be $18. In the meantime you can still subscribe, renew or extend subscriptions at the present $15 rate.

BOOKS

"Red Trains Remembered", by Robert S. Ford, a companion volume to "Red Trains in the East Bay", is now available (Interurbans, PO Box 6444, Glendale CA 91205, $16.95 plus $1.25 post & hdlg, plus 6% tax in Calif.). This is a magnificent picture book of the SP's electric train and ferryboat operations in San Francisco's Eastbay. The more than 200 photos, spread over 120 8½x11 pages, are accompanied by informative notes and captions, maps and a reprint of employee timetables. We particularly loved this book because it shows scenes of the past in, almost literally, our back yard. Wouldn't want to be without it!

CARS & CONSISTS

*NRHS Toronto convention trains: "Maple Leaf", Jul 24: engines 6060 & tender, CN 6539 A-unit; cars 9635 baggage, 1204 "George Kelch" RNRH, 5213, 5417, 5207, 5552 CN, 5219, 5288, 5202, 5423 CN, 727 "Fort Mitchell" RNRH, 501 RNRH, 3305 obs RNRH. "Canadian Crusader", Jul 26: engines 6060 & tender, CN 6785 FPA-4; 9635, 5225, 5198, 727 "Fort Mitchell" RNRH, 5629 CN, 5409, 5294, 5227, 5552, 303 CN, 304 obs CN. (RNRH cars owned by Roanoke Chap. NRHS. Other cars in VIA colors unless noted.)

*PRAIRIE MARKSMAN, train 311, Chicago Aug 10 (1st southbd revenue run): engine 240 (F40); cars 21234 Amcoach, 20038 Amcafe, 21266 Amcoach. (Left 25mins late due to train 371 with HEP malfunction blocking track; trains use same track at Chicago.)

*SAN JOAQUIN, train 710, Oakland Aug 5: engine 203; cars 20035 Amcafe, 21190.

*LAKE SHORE LIMITED, train 49, Schenectady Aug 11: engines 302, 263; cars 1615, 2051, 2996 "Pine Hill", 4603, 4628, 4612, 4621, 3101, 8504, 4614, 21103 (high-density Amcoach), 4617, 4602, 2887, 1150. Train 48, Chicago Sep 1: engines 304, 298; cars 1613, 2050, 2445, 4702, 4604, 4731, 3105 (lounge with 2 employees), 8501, 4611, 4617, 4619, 4615, 2982 "Pine Rapid", 1162.

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 11, San Jose Sep 1: engines SP 9355, Atk 513, 642; cars 1233, 5424, 5604, 5430, 5672, 8323, 5678, dome 9473, 5805, 4470, 4401, dome 9350, 8804-8805 twin unit diner, 2663 "Silver Slope", 2214 "Indian Lake".

*WILLAMETTE VALLEY, train 752, Eugene Aug 19: engine 253; Superliner cars 34084, 34011 (with snack bar), 34038.

*PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL, train 793, Seattle Aug 24: engine 215; Superliner cars 34021, 34015 (with snack bar), 34058.

*EMPIRE BUILDER, train 8, Whitefish MT Aug 21: engines 250, 288; cars 1167, coach-dorm transition car 39902, coach-bag 31009, coaches 34008, 34097, 34091, 34045, diner 38006, sleeper 32002.

*ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, train 347, Chicago Aug 13: engine 280; Superliner coaches 31001 (coach-bag), 34000, 34003.

*TWILIGHT LIMITED, train 354, Chicago Aug 13: engine 238; cars 1164, 20126, 21192, 21425, 21200.

*CRESCENT, train 19, New Orleans Aug 27 (first arrival of 2nd HEP set): engines 312, 257; cars 1150, 1617, 4630, 4607, 4734, 4608, 4606, 4600, 4626, 3107, 8511, 2882, 2887, 2981 "Pine Crest".

*BROADWAY LIMITED, train 41, Pittsburgh Aug 30: engines 317, 320; cars 1241, 1210, 1231, 1610, 2889, 2083, 4721, 4703, 4708, 4720, 20029 Amcafe, 8507, 3102, 4717, 4701, 2884 (?).

*PENNSYLVANIAN, train 46, Pittsburgh Aug 30: engine 270; cars 21828, 20027, 21128.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Here in Canada we consume approximately 1.8 million barrels of oil every day. Of this amount, approximately 50% is allocated to transportation. And of the transportation allocation, 75% is consumed by the private automobile. Obviously, if we in Canada are to protect ourselves against iffy politics abroad in terms of oil supply, then we must protect ourselves against the voracious appetite of the automobile at home. And one of the most logical means of effecting this protection is to evolve our public transportation system which can definitely be more fuel efficient than the automobile in terms of seat-miles per gallon of fuel."

--J. Frank Roberts, VIA Rail Canada Chairman & President, in address to NRHS convention, Toronto, July 25.

SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"The new (Superliner) Empire Builder is a two-decker train... Through Gate 16, the train rose up along the platform like a great red-and-blue-and-silvery ship moored alongside a pier. The sleeping car came first, at the rear of the train. Beyond it was the diner, then three coaches, a baggage car, a mail car, and two electric locomotives."

--Berton Roueché in The New Yorker, Sept 15.

(Followed by a work train hastily stringing catenary to Seattle.)

RAIL FANTRIPS

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. To be sure of entry in time, send full info at least 4 weeks before event. Be sure to address letter as follows: RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Oct 10-13: Oakland-Salt Lake City RT, SFZ, Heber Creeper steam fall color special Heber-Bridalveil Falls RT, Organ Loft Restaurant with Wurlitzer, Mormon Tabernacle etc, Accent on Travel, 1030 Curtis, Menlo Park CA 94025; (415) 326-7330.

Dec 6-7: NY-Edaville RT, overnite at Plymouth, visit Valley RR, Essex CT; joint RRE/R&LHS trip. The RR Enthusiasts, Trip Committee, PO Box A-1353, New York NY 10017. Please include stamped self-addressed envelope.

Jan 15-29, 1981: Mexico Railfan Fun Train, 5834 kilometers on National & Sureste Rwys. Private cars; Merida & narrow gauge ride, 4.1% grades, ride on locomotives. Midwest Travel Service, 2936R Bella Vista, Midwest City OK 73110; 405-732-0566.

EXPRESS ADS

MASTERS OF RAIL TRAVEL--and Amtrak is our specialty. We enjoy seeing that YOU have the best accommodations available. Call or write us--GREAT WESTERN TOURS, Sheraton Palace Hotel, Suite 900, San Francisco 94105; (415) 398-2994. Receive your tickets by mail--pay by check or credit card. It's easy--one call does it all

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports from 30 railroads. Long stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. Will buy items.

Support the efforts of the American Private Car Association. 16 to 24-page informative bi-monthly newsletter with quality photos - $15.00 annually. Sample copy $3.00. Associate membership - $50 annually (includes newsletter). Active membership - $100 annually (for car owners). Subscribe or request additional info on memberships to: Private Cars, P.O. Box 1211, Mountainside, NJ 07092.

TROLLEY TRAILS THROUGH THE WEST: Vol. 7 - Northern California and Vol. 8 - Southern California $4.00 each. Back issues: Vol. 1-Yakima, 2-Seattle, 3-Portland, 4-Tacoma/Spokane, 5-Montana/Utah, 6-Western Canada $3.00 each. All moneyback guarantee. Wilson Bros. Publishers, Box 712rtn, Yakima WA 98907.

DON'T DIAL AMTRAK! Dial (415) 326-7330 for your reservations and avoid busy signals and "holds"! Low fares for families, handicapped travelers, senior citizens. We sell Britrail and Eurail passes. Call "The Railfans" at Accent on Travel, 1030 Curtis St., Menlo Park, California 94025. (415) 326-7330.

TO OBJECT to Canadian train cutbacks, write Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin, P.C., M.P., Minister of Transport, House of Commons, Ottawa. (Mark envelope PERSONAL so he will get it.)

RAIL PASSENGERS: A new book, "The Social Consequences of Rail Closures", by Mayer Hillman and Anne Whalley, is now available from the Policy Studies Institute, 1-2 Castle Lane, London, SW1E 6DR, England, for $15 U.S. or $18 Canadian. This book proves the harm done by rail cuts is serious.

The Annual Meeting of Transport 2000 Canada will take place at the Richelieu Inn, 430 Ouellette Ave., Windsor, Ontario on Sunday, Oct 12, 1980, at 1:30pm.

TRANSPORT 2000 MEMBER'S NOTICE: re October 12th A.G.M. in Windsor: Those attending prior meetings in Detroit may wish to reserve at the site: the Book Cadillac Hotel --call 1-313-256-8000. T2000 & NARP members send $35 U.S. fee to: Room 606, 2405 West Vernor, Detroit MI 48216, USA. Non-members $75. (This notice remedies omission in mailed flyer.)

FOUR COUNTRIES - Canada, USA, UK and France, will be represented at T-2000 Canada annual meeting in Windsor, at the Richelieu Inn, on Oct 12. Registrations, 9am, $3; Tour of Windsor, 10am. Meeting 1:30pm. Prominent speaker.

NEW CANADIAN TIMETABLES. VIA schedules change Sep 29. Send $1.00 to Transport 2000, Box 858, Station B, Ottawa, Ont., K1P 5P9, Canada, for handling, postage of new system folder.

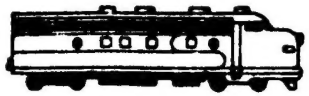
AMTRAK--Reserve now for winter travel to avoid possible fare increases.
Get the facts from the Rail Experts, including new circle fares.
Let's Travel, PO Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. Call 714-787-8350 afternoons.

"STEAM SOUNDS" REISSUED. The C&O Historical Society has reissued "Chesapeake & Ohio Sounds, Vol 1". Includes 8 different loco classes and sounds of everyday railroading in 1952. Send $7 to C&O Historical Society, Dept T, 212 Bolivar Dr., Yorktown, VA 23692. Virginia residents add 4% tax. A unique album.

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads: only $1.25 per square inch. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

BACK ISSUES

The full year 1979 is now available--Volume 9, 15 issues of RTN all in one parcel for just $5.50 postpd, no tax. Also: 1978 $5.50; 1977 (22 issues) $7. RTN, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.



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